

# CA Jobs First Sustainable Recreation & Tourism Cohort

## Quick recap

The meeting focused on updates and discussions related to tourism, recreation, and economic development across California. John provided field notes on state and federal policy updates, including budget allocations, federal agency relocations, and climate impacts on recreation. Zoot shared insights on Orange County's tourism landscape, pilot programs, and initiatives to reduce waste, while highlighting the importance of regional collaboration and innovation. Calder and John outlined plans for an upcoming in-person convening on April 23rd in Sacramento, aimed at developing recommendations for post-Jobs First economic development, with a focus on sustainability, equity, and innovation. Participants discussed challenges such as transportation, housing, and perceptions of the tourism sector, and shared ideas for accelerating regional growth. The conversation ended with a call for participants interested in contributing to the April convening.

## Meeting Start and Participant Introductions

The meeting began with casual conversation about weather conditions, with Calder mentioning early spring weather and John discussing upcoming snow. The group welcomed new participants, including Zoot, who shared details about their 1904 house and virtual background. Calder encouraged everyone to make small talk while waiting for the meeting to start, and mentioned that Read AI meeting notes had been added to the meeting. The meeting was officially recorded, with Calder expressing frustration about the frequency of automated recording notifications.

## Orange County Tourism and Trails

The meeting began with introductions and small talk, including Billy discussing the current weather and tourism season in Coachella Valley. Calder then reviewed the schedule for the day, which included field notes from John, a regional presentation from Zoot about Orange County, and an introduction to an upcoming cohort in-person convening on April 23rd. John provided updates on various topics, including the Outdoors for All convening, the California Trails Survey, and federal budget and policy changes. Zoot shared his background and outlined his approach

to addressing tourism and outdoor recreation in Orange County, highlighting the need for improved transportation and collaboration between cities.

#### Tourism Initiatives and Regional Growth

Zoot presented updates on pilot programs including Cooperation Santa Ana's market and microfarm, and RevHub's tourism incubator. He outlined plans for a bi-weekly newsletter called "Octave" starting in March, which will cover topics like OC tourism landscape, future Olympic sites, and emerging technologies in tourism. Zoot also shared insights from his book on Orange County history, drawing parallels between the Sunkist orange industry collaboration and the potential for tourism growth in the region. Calder expressed admiration for Zoot's work and discussed the potential for sharing articles across regions.

#### Southern California Tourism Trends

The meeting focused on tourism patterns in Southern California, with Zoot explaining that visitors typically start their trips in LA or Orange County, often visiting Disneyland, before exploring other areas. John inquired about the impact of federal actions on visitation, to which Zoot responded that Orange County's parks are mostly county or state managed, so they haven't felt significant effects beyond reduced grant funding for nonprofits. The discussion concluded with Carly asking about hostel accommodations in Southern California, to which Zoot replied that it's difficult to find affordable housing, let alone hostels, in the region.

#### Promoting Reusable Systems in Tourism

The group discussed the lack of hostels in Southern California due to high real estate costs and the limited presence of reusable programs in ecotourism, despite efforts in reef and coastal restoration. Carly highlighted the importance of reducing single-use disposables and promoting reusable systems to support local jobs and sustainability. Zoot expressed interest in receiving statistics and articles on event waste and catering practices for his newsletter, and Carly offered to share resources and collaborate further on waste reduction initiatives. Calder emphasized Carly's expertise in renewables and waste reduction, and Zoot noted Orange County's leadership in water recycling, suggesting a potential focus on expanding reuse systems.

#### Sacramento Tourism Development Convening

The meeting discussed plans for an in-person convening on April 23rd in Sacramento, aiming to bring together 25-30 participants from various tourism and recreation sectors to brainstorm recommendations for post-Jobs First economic development. Calder and John outlined the event's objectives, including developing a policy and advocacy document by summer 2026, and introduced Austin as the facilitator. The group discussed potential session topics such as sustainability, equity, innovation, regional identity, and workforce development. Participants

were encouraged to share ideas for accelerating their regions' development, and Calder invited those interested in attending the April event to express their interest.

#### Sacramento Trails Policy Meeting Planning

The group discussed plans for an upcoming meeting in Sacramento in April, focusing on policy discussions around trails and recreation. Calder emphasized the need for diverse participants across sectors and regions who are passionate about policy work, while John highlighted the importance of the event for Jobs First initiatives. Austin introduced himself as a facilitator and mediator who will help develop the agenda, and several participants expressed interest in attending the event. The group also discussed potential participants, including those involved in recreation projects and workforce development.